

# Kingdom and Covenant in the New Testament

RESOURCES

STUDY GUIDES BY SECTION



## KINGDOM AND COVENANT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

### STUDY GUIDE 1.1

#### Lesson 1: Why Study New Testament Theology?

##### Section 1: Inspiration and Authority

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### Introduction

#### I. Inspiration and Authority

##### A. Affirmations

1. Twelve Disciples
2. Apostles and Prophets
3. New Testament Books

##### B. Clarifications

1. Inspiration
2. Authority

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How does Lesson 1 define "New Testament Theology"?
2. Explain the point made in the lesson based on 2 Timothy 2:15 about doing New Testament theology.
3. Explain the arguments given in the lesson to defend the inspiration of the New Testament. Note especially the importance of 2 Timothy 3:16, Ephesians 2:20, and Ephesians 3:4-5. Explain whether Paul

is considered an apostle. Explain the comments made by Paul and Peter that point to the inspiration of the New Testament.

4. Describe each view of inspiration: romantic, mechanical, and organic.

5. Explain each level on which we can explore New Testament theology: explicit assertions, theological presuppositions, and implicit purposes.

6. The lesson says, "The New Testament was written \_\_\_\_\_ us, but not directly \_\_\_\_\_ us."

7. "If we are to submit to the authority of Scripture, we need to consider the context and \_\_\_\_\_ of a passage."

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What do you hope to learn in this course?

2. Do you believe in the inspiration of the New Testament? How would you defend your view?

3. Explain why the inspiration of the New Testament is important. What difference does it make to you personally?

4. Has this lesson changed your view of inspiration? How? What difference does this make to you personally?

5. In what ways does 2 Timothy 2:15 challenge you personally?

6. Do you usually study the original context and purpose of a passage in order to understand it better? Has this lesson challenged you to do this more?

## KINGDOM AND COVENANT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

### STUDY GUIDE 1.2

#### Lesson 1: Why Study New Testament Theology?

#### Section 2: Continuities and Discontinuities

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### II. Continuities and Discontinuities

##### A. Epochal

1. Continuities
2. Discontinuities

##### B. Cultural

1. Continuities
2. Discontinuities

##### C. Personal

1. Continuities
2. Discontinuities

#### Conclusion

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How does Lesson 1 define an "epoch" of biblical history?
2. What is the main division of Bible history?
3. What period of history is included under the new covenant?

4. What are the three kinds of continuities and discontinuities between the New Testament time and our time studied in the lesson?
5. What are some of the epochal "continuities" and "discontinuities" between the New Testament time and our day?
6. What was the purpose of New Testament miracles?
7. What is the view expressed in the lesson regarding whether God continues to work supernaturally since the time of the New Testament.
8. What is "culture"? In what ways is it expressed?
9. What are some of the cultural "continuities" and "discontinuities" between the New Testament time and our day?
10. "We sometimes summarize our understanding of Scripture by saying it is the word of God in the words of human authors given in \_\_\_\_\_."
11. "If we don't understand the \_\_\_\_\_ in which the Scriptures were written, if we don't understand the \_\_\_\_\_, the Scriptures can be easily misconstrued."
12. The New Testament authors had versions of the Old Testament available to them in what languages?
13. In what language was the New Testament written?
14. What are some of the personal "continuities" and "discontinuities" between the New Testament time and our day?

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What are some of the "continuities" that help you understand the New Testament?
2. What are some of the "discontinuities" that make it more challenging for you to understand the New Testament? What can you do to overcome that difficulty?
3. What is the most significant thing you learned in this lesson? Explain.
4. How would the discontinuities and continuities between the New Testament time and our time affect your interpretation of 1 Corinthians 11:2-16?

## KINGDOM AND COVENANT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

### STUDY GUIDE 2.1

#### Lesson 2: The Kingdom of God

##### Section 1: Good News

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### Introduction

#### I. Good News

##### A. Meaning

##### B. Kingdom of God

###### 1. Unwavering Sovereignty

###### 2. Unfolding Kingdom

##### C. Developing Significance

###### 1. Israel's Failures

###### 2. Israel's Hopes

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is the key theme underlying all New Testament theology?
2. Another phrase for "gospel" is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The phrase "good news" comes from the Greek noun \_\_\_\_\_.
4. What is the main message of the gospel?
5. Explain the meaning of the word in the Greek Old Testament for "proclaiming the good news."
6. What is the basic concept of the gospel in the New Testament?

7. How does Lesson 2 define the "kingdom of God"?
8. Scripture refers to God's kingdom in two primary ways. What are they?
9. Were Abraham's descendants faithful to God?
10. What two evil empires did God call to conquer the Jewish people and take them into exile?
11. What does it mean when Isaiah says that the Lord will "bare his holy arm"?
12. Has the theme of the kingdom of God in the New Testament been recognized in traditional Christian theology?
13. Because of Israel's failures, by the time of the New Testament, what were the expectations regarding the kingdom of God?

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. How has this lesson changed your view of the main message of the gospel?
2. Why is the biblical theme of the kingdom of God important to you personally? How does it affect your understanding of the Bible? Of salvation? Of your relationship with God, with the church, and with society?
3. What can we learn from the failures of Israel? Do you see similar failures in the Church today?
4. Do you think individualism is a problem among Christians in our day? Can you give examples of how it is manifest? Do you yourself sometimes tend to see your Christian life in an individualistic way? Do you think the concept of the kingdom of God helps to develop a less individualistic life?
5. There is an anecdote about three workers during the Middle Ages. Someone saw them working and came over to see what it was about. When he asked the first, "Sir, can you tell me what you are doing?" The worker replied, "I am laying bricks." When he approached the second to ask the same thing, his answer was, "I'm making a wall." Finally, when he asked the third, he proudly replied, "I am building a cathedral!"<sup>1</sup>

What can we learn from this anecdote about our role in building the kingdom of God?

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<sup>1</sup> This story is found in many sites and in various versions. According to the following site of "Harvard Magazine," the original author is Peter Drucker. <<http://harvardmagazine.com/breaking-news/three-stonecutters-the-future-business-education>> (Oct. 14, 2015).

## KINGDOM AND COVENANT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

### STUDY GUIDE 2.2

#### Lesson 2: The Kingdom of God

#### Section 2: Coming

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### II. Coming

##### A. Expectations

##### B. Threefold Victory

###### 1. Defeat

###### 2. Deliverance

#### Conclusion

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Did the early followers of Jesus understand how the kingdom of God would come?
2. What phrase was often used by rabbis and leaders in Israel to describe the present age of sin, suffering and death that exists since the Fall?
3. What phrase was often used by rabbis and leaders in Israel to describe the future age of righteousness, love, joy, and peace that would follow the exile?
4. What were the ideas of the Jewish sects about the coming Messiah and the transition to a future age of righteousness, love, joy and peace?
5. What word comes from the Greek translation of "Messiah" in Hebrew?
6. What is meant by "inaugurated eschatology"?
7. What are the three stages of the coming of God's kingdom?
8. What phrase used in reference to Jesus indicates that He was the rightful king of Israel?



9. When Jesus came, did He inflict judgment on both human and spiritual enemies? What were the Jewish sects expecting?
10. Lesson 2 describes two aspects of the New Testament victory of the kingdom of God. What are they?
11. Explain the teaching of Colossians 2:15 regarding Jesus' victory over the powers and authorities.
12. With whom is the church at war?
13. When Jesus returns, will He defeat both spiritual and human enemies?
14. Describe the blessings of deliverance for each stage of the coming of the kingdom of God: inauguration continuation, consummation.
15. "It's no exaggeration to say that New Testament faith is all about \_\_\_\_\_."

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What can we learn from the fact that at the time of the New Testament, there was confusion about the coming of the Messiah? How should it affect the way we deal with differing views about the second coming of Christ?
2. How does the distinction between spiritual enemies and human enemies help you with the ministry of the church and your own ministry?
3. What is the most significant thing you learned in this lesson? Explain.
4. Suppose that you are talking with a young Christian lady about her job. She works as a secretary at the local government office, which provides housing for the poor. She herself sits at a desk all day, typing documents, notes from their meetings, letters to government officials, and other similar things.  
  
How could you help this young lady understand that her job is related to the kingdom of God? What would you tell her to help see the importance of her job, even when it seems tedious?

## KINGDOM AND COVENANT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

### STUDY GUIDE 3.1

#### Lesson 3: The New Covenant

#### Section 1: Kingdom Administration

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### Introduction

#### I. Kingdom Administration

##### A. Covenant Representatives

1. Old Testament
2. New Covenant

##### B. Appropriate Policies

1. Old Testament
2. New Covenant

##### C. Organic Development

1. Old Testament
2. New Covenant

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is a covenant?
2. What was a "suzerain-vassal treaty"? What was a suzerain? A vassal?
3. What was a "parity treaty"?
4. What was a "universal covenant"?

5. What was a "national covenant"?
6. Who is the representative of the new covenant?
7. Describe each covenant. Give the name for each one as mentioned in the lesson.

The covenant with Adam.

The covenant with Noah.

The covenant with Abraham.

The covenant with Moses.

The covenant with David.

The covenant of fulfillment in Christ.

8. Which covenants were "national" covenants?
9. "The days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new \_\_\_\_\_ with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah" (Jeremiah 31:31)
10. "This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time ... I will put my law in their minds and write it on their \_\_\_\_\_. I will be their God, and they will be my people. (Jeremiah 31:33)
11. What are the three stages of the unfolding of the new covenant age?
12. What illustration is used to explain the development of covenant policies over history?
13. "Each Old Testament covenant had different covenant representatives and focused on policies that were appropriate for a particular time in history. But... there was \_\_\_\_\_ unity despite these changes."
14. Describe the relationship between the covenants of the Old Testament. What happened to a previous covenant when a new stage was established?
15. How does the lesson explain the relationship of the new covenant with the Old Testament covenants?

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. How does the concept of the covenant help you understand your relationship with God? How does it help you grow in your faith?

2. Do you sometimes feel like you are still living in the time of the Old Testament, in terms of your relationship to God? How should it be different now?

3. How do you tend to think the New Testament and the Old Testament are related? Do you tend to make too much distinction? Do you tend to make too little distinction? Did the lesson help you understand this relationship? In what way?

4. The *Westminster Confession of Faith* mentions some differences between the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Chapter 7, section 6, says:

Under the gospel, when Christ, the substance, was exhibited, the ordinances in which this covenant is dispensed are the preaching of the Word, and the administration of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper: which, though fewer in number, and administered with more simplicity, and less outward glory, yet, in them, it is held forth in more fullness, evidence, and spiritual efficacy, to all nations, both Jews and Gentiles; and is called the new testament. There are not therefore two covenants of grace, differing in substance, but one and the same, under various dispensations.

What are some of the differences mentioned in this confession?

What do you think of the statement?

## KINGDOM AND COVENANT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

### STUDY GUIDE 3.2

#### Lesson 3: The New Covenant

#### Section 2: Dynamics of Interaction

### OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

#### II. Dynamics of Interaction

##### A. Divine Benevolence

1. Old Testament

2. New Covenant

##### B. Tests of Loyalty

1. Old Testament

2. New Covenant

##### C. Consequences

1. Old Testament

2. New Covenant

#### Conclusion

### REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What does Lesson 3 teach about God's interactions with his people? Are they often beyond human comprehension?

2. What are the three key principles of God's covenants with His people?

3. What is the difference between "common grace" and "saving grace"?

4. In what two senses are believers united with Christ? Explain their meanings.
5. Mention the examples of how God tested the loyalty of His people in the Old Testament.
6. Does the new covenant require tests of loyalty?
7. What was the height of Jesus' manifestation of His loyalty as the new covenant representative?
8. What is justification?
9. What is sanctification?
10. "Prior to the new covenant, the consequences of both blessings and \_\_\_\_\_ were crucial dimensions of God's interactions with his covenant representatives, and with his covenant people as a whole."
11. In what ways did Christ, as the representative of the new covenant, experience both God's curses and God's blessings?
12. "Because we are 'in Christ,' every \_\_\_\_\_ of God has already been assigned to true believers."
13. Do believers experience the consequences of obedience or disobedience in their daily lives? Explain.
14. "The blessings that true believers receive in this life are \_\_\_\_\_ of the eternal blessings that will come at the consummation of the kingdom."

#### QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. How does the concept of common grace change the way you think about non Christians and their contributions to society? Think of how you relate to non-believers you know. Do you only think of how you can evangelize them, or do you also appreciate them and their friendship? Think of how you tend to think of non-Christian literature, art, music, or movies. Do you tend to be very critical, or do you look for common grace? Think of how you look for a mechanic or a medical doctor. Do you always feel you should only go to a Christian mechanic or doctor?
2. How does the distinction between being "in Christ" and having Christ "in us" help you understand the different aspects of your salvation and your relationship with God?
3. How can you harmonize the concept of salvation by grace with the teaching that we experience the consequences of obedience or disobedience as Christians?

4. Read Galatians 3:24-4:7.

Paul compares the people of God in the Old Testament to a child who is being led by a tutor, which was the law, to Christ (3:24). It was more difficult to see all the benefits of being God's children at that time. However, now that Christ has come, we can better understand our blessings, and we can see the difference between being a slave and being a son (4: 1-6).

What are some of the ways a young child is similar to a young slave?

In what ways is a child different from a slave?

Are you experiencing those differences?

We could explain it like this: during the Old Testament, the law was still in the foreground, pointing to Christ, and since the New Testament, Jesus himself is clearly in the foreground. The law is still there, and it is a good thing, but now we can clearly see Jesus Himself and take Him by the hand.

How is it for you? Are you still holding the law by the hand as your "tutor," or have you already taken Christ by the hand? Do you still tend to see the law in the foreground or is Jesus in the foreground?

If you are driving on the highway, you need signs to guide you on the right road to your destiny, tell you the speed limit, and warn you of dangers.

*However, what if you just looked at the signs, without looking at the road?*

*What happens when we only look at the law, and we take our eyes off Jesus?*

5. What is the most important lesson you have learned in this whole course?

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